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(g) Requires institutions that offer distance education or correspondence education to have processes in place through which the institution establishes that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. The agency meets this requirement if it—

(1) Requires institutions to verify the identity of a student who participates in class or coursework by using, at the option of the institution, methods such as—

- (i) A secure login and pass code;
- (ii) Proctored examinations; and
- (iii) New or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identity; and

(2) Makes clear in writing that institutions must use processes that protect student privacy and notify students of any projected additional student charges associated with the verification of student identity at the time of registration or enrollment.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1099b)

[64 FR 56617, Oct. 20, 1999, as amended at 74 FR 55427, Oct. 27, 2009]

§ 602.18 Ensuring consistency in decision-making.

The agency must consistently apply and enforce standards that respect the stated mission of the institution, including religious mission, and that ensure that the education or training offered by an institution or program, including any offered through distance education or correspondence education, is of sufficient quality to achieve its stated objective for the duration of any accreditation or preaccreditation period granted by the agency. The agency meets this requirement if the agency—

(a) Has written specification of the requirements for accreditation and preaccreditation that include clear standards for an institution or program to be accredited;

(b) Has effective controls against the inconsistent application of the agency's standards;

(c) Bases decisions regarding accreditation and preaccreditation on the agency's published standards;

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(d) Has a reasonable basis for determining that the information the agency relies on for making accrediting decisions is accurate; and

(e) Provides the institution or program with a detailed written report that clearly identifies any deficiencies in the institution's or program's compliance with the agency's standards.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1099b)

[64 FR 56617, Oct. 20, 1999, as amended at 74 FR 55427, Oct. 27, 2009]

§ 602.19 Monitoring and reevaluation of accredited institutions and programs.

(a) The agency must reevaluate, at regularly established intervals, the institutions or programs it has accredited or preaccredited.

(b) The agency must demonstrate it has, and effectively applies, a set of monitoring and evaluation approaches that enables the agency to identify problems with an institution's or program's continued compliance with agency standards and that takes into account institutional or program strengths and stability. These approaches must include periodic reports, and collection and analysis of key data and indicators, identified by the agency, including, but not limited to, fiscal information and measures of student achievement, consistent with the provisions of § 602.16(f). This provision does not require institutions or programs to provide annual reports on each specific accreditation criterion.

(c) Each agency must monitor overall growth of the institutions or programs it accredits and, at least annually, collect headcount enrollment data from those institutions or programs.

(d) Institutional accrediting agencies must monitor the growth of programs at institutions experiencing significant enrollment growth, as reasonably defined by the agency.

(e) Any agency that has notified the Secretary of a change in its scope in accordance with § 602.27(a)(5) must monitor the headcount enrollment of each institution it has accredited that offers distance education or correspondence education. If any such institution has experienced an increase in headcount enrollment of 50 percent or more within one institutional fiscal

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year, the agency must report that information to the Secretary within 30 days of acquiring such data.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1099b)

[64 FR 56617, Oct. 20, 1999, as amended at 74 FR 55427, Oct. 27, 2009]

§ 602.20 Enforcement of standards.

(a) If the agency's review of an institution or program under any standard indicates that the institution or program is not in compliance with that standard, the agency must—

(1) Immediately initiate adverse action against the institution or program; or

(2) Require the institution or program to take appropriate action to bring itself into compliance with the agency's standards within a time period that must not exceed—

(i) Twelve months, if the program, or the longest program offered by the institution, is less than one year in length;

(ii) Eighteen months, if the program, or the longest program offered by the institution, is at least one year, but less than two years, in length; or

(iii) Two years, if the program, or the longest program offered by the institution, is at least two years in length.

(b) If the institution or program does not bring itself into compliance within the specified period, the agency must take immediate adverse action unless the agency, for good cause, extends the period for achieving compliance.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1099b)

§ 602.21 Review of standards.

(a) The agency must maintain a systematic program of review that demonstrates that its standards are adequate to evaluate the quality of the education or training provided by the institutions and programs it accredits and relevant to the educational or training needs of students.

(b) The agency determines the specific procedures it follows in evaluating its standards, but the agency must ensure that its program of review—

(1) Is comprehensive;

(2) Occurs at regular, yet reasonable, intervals or on an ongoing basis;

(3) Examines each of the agency's standards and the standards as a whole; and

(4) Involves all of the agency's relevant constituencies in the review and affords them a meaningful opportunity to provide input into the review.

(c) If the agency determines, at any point during its systematic program of review, that it needs to make changes to its standards, the agency must initiate action within 12 months to make the changes and must complete that action within a reasonable period of time. Before finalizing any changes to its standards, the agency must—

(1) Provide notice to all of the agency's relevant constituencies, and other parties who have made their interest known to the agency, of the changes the agency proposes to make;

(2) Give the constituencies and other interested parties adequate opportunity to comment on the proposed changes; and

(3) Take into account any comments on the proposed changes submitted timely by the relevant constituencies and by other interested parties.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1099b)

REQUIRED OPERATING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

§ 602.22 Substantive change.

(a) If the agency accredits institutions, it must maintain adequate substantive change policies that ensure that any substantive change to the educational mission, program, or programs of an institution after the agency has accredited or preaccredited the institution does not adversely affect the capacity of the institution to continue to meet the agency's standards. The agency meets this requirement if—

(1) The agency requires the institution to obtain the agency's approval of the substantive change before the agency includes the change in the scope of accreditation or preaccreditation it previously granted to the institution; and

(2) The agency's definition of substantive change includes at least the following types of change:

(i) Any change in the established mission or objectives of the institution.